

February Newsletter No.1/2009 courtesy of Capt Andy's

### Broadbill bounty for night-time anglers

Billfish continue to be plentiful in all areas, but with February nearing, when many international anglers converge on Kenya, there has been renewed interest in fishing for broadbill swordfish. This is done at night, preferably in dark moonless conditions, either by trolling lures enhanced by light-sticks, which glow in the dark waters, or by drifting squid at various depths, also with light-sticks near the bait.

Neptune returned on Monday with five broadbill and two striped marlin after an overnight trip, with one of the swordfish weighed at 88.6 kgs, a big fish for which a record is being claimed for the European club member. They were fishing outside the Centre Mlima, one of the nearest spots where these fish are found.

Unreel followed this Thursday coming in with six broadbill as well as a black marlin, so with this sort of fishing one can expect more anglers to concentrate on the night fishing, and even some attempts on the world records on fly tackle, all of which are held in Kenya at present.

The exceptional run of sailfish off Malindi continues, six boats from Malindi hosting teams of Belgian anglers, and with thirty five sailfish and a striped marlin recorded on the first day prospects are good.

Nick Conway took some clients from Holland out in Eclare to catch fifteen sail and two wahoo in the day, while Castle Lager from Watamu found eight sail on a Malindi trip, after scoring a black and a striped marlin in the Rips the previous day, great variety for the South Africans. Peter Betz from Germany caught a black marlin and three sail on Snark, then next day releasing another black of 100 kgs on 15kg line, this being the third marlin for the boat in three consecutive days.

Most boats are fishing the Rips, with Clueless having one of the best days, a blue and three striped marlin released, as well as both Tarka and Instedda finding three stripies in the day. B's Nest tagged a blue marlin estimated at 110kgs plus two stripies with Julian Mills, J. Lowe and R. Minter-Kemp, while Alleycat released a very nice blue marlin, estimated at over 200 kgs, a good fish on 24kg line in a fight lasting under the hour.

Seahorse made a change releasing a mako shark followed by a stripey and seven sail, while some boats vary the scene by bottom fishing in the Rips, for snapper, grouper and amberjack. Interestingly, there are no records for the latter in the Kenya records, while recent fish caught could easily set a new All Africa All Tackle record, although there do not appear to be line class Africa records for this species.

The tagging programme is urgently looking for sponsorship, to buy the special tags which come from USA, printing the catch certificates and providing cash for returned tags, without which many recovered tags can be thrown away. The African Billfish Foundation, which organises the tagging, is a voluntarily run charity doing a very

necessary job, providing scientific information needed in research on fish stocks and conservation in our oceans – this must surely be a most deserving cause.